

NEWSBREAKER

CALIFORNIA SHORE & BEACH PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION

October 2004

President's Message

by David Cannon

I am writing to you from the relative comfort of my hotel room in New Orleans on Thursday, September 16, 2004, the morning after hurricane Ivan passed through the Gulf Coast. The American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) annual conference was supposed to run from Monday through Wednesday, but it was cut short on Tuesday afternoon due to Ivan. Riding out the storm gave me an understanding of living with the threat of hurricanes as well as a renewed appreciation for living in California. I sure do miss the mild winds, light rainfall, and 15-degree temperature swing around 70 degrees that we call "weather". Anyway, I thought I would take advantage of the quiet time to write a summary of the conference so here it is.

Harry Simmons (ASBPA President) informed the attendees that ASBPA is very strong financially. There was a shortfall in membership dues attributed to the merging of ASBPA and ACC earlier this year. However, this shortfall was more than compensated for by conference revenues attributed to attendance (200 actual vs. 100 planned) and sponsorship. Of course, the expenses for the conference will have to be worked out given the impact of Ivan so some adjustments are likely in the next few months. Harry also indicated that membership in the organization has increased to about 900 people with a broader range of interests (e.g., biologists and regulatory specialists). He informed the conference attendees that the 80th anniversary of ASBPA would take place in 2006 (i.e., founded in 1926) and that he would like to see our membership pass the 1,000-member point in time for that event. Since ASBPA was founded in New Jersey, Harry set a goal for the 2006 conference committee of holding the conference in New Jersey if at all possible.

Howard Marlowe (ASBPA Governmental Affairs representative) gave the attendees an update of legislative issues related to beaches and shorelines. In short, Howard indicated that ASBPA is winning some battles, but he fears that we are losing the war with regards to the role of the federal government in shoreline and beach preservation. The battles that were won include modifications to two pieces of pending legislation. One piece of legislation involved the formation of a Beach Nourishment Advisory Council to oversee Corps (U.S. Army Corps of Engi-

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Your Vote Could Make the Difference

Editorial

In light of the President's Message (left), and Mr. Josh Reichert's opinion piece on Page 5, it seems that the American people need to decide now whether or not we will fight to preserve our coastal resources for future generations. Most people probably want to see their children and grandchildren grow up in a world that offers the same natural wonders that were offered to themselves as youngsters.

With the elections forthcoming in November, it's time for America to step up to the plate and take action. Americans have the power with that

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UPCOMING H2O CONFERENCE...

See the bottom of the back page for detailed information on the conference date and location.

President's Message *Continued from Page 1*

neers) beach nourishment projects, and the other involved modifications to the cost-sharing agreement between the federal government and local sponsors (transferring more costs to the local sponsors). In addition, ASBPA was successful in fighting proposed changes by OMB (Office of Management and Budget) that would have redefined ongoing beach re-nourishment as maintenance, thereby shifting the burden of these activities to the local sponsor. By losing the war, Howard was referring to the relative lack of public education/outreach being done by ASBPA especially when compared to the level of education/outreach being done by environmental groups such as the Environmental Defense Fund. Bluntly put, ASBPA must do a better job of reaching out to the public and elected officials to make sure our message is getting to the right people to make sure they are making informed decisions.

California was represented very well at the conference with the following ASBPA members from our state in attendance: David Cannon (CSBPA President), Russell Boudreau (ASBPA Secretary), Kim Sterrett (ASBPA Board Member), Reinhard Flick (Shore & Beach Editor), and Pam Slater-Price (ASBPA Board Member).

Your Vote Could Make the Difference

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often-underestimated tool called the "vote," to effect a change in our state's and our country's policies on oceans and the environment. It's our elected officials who have the direct power to turn the tide in society's coastal and environmental pursuits (or lack thereof), and it's each and every vote that gives those officials the power and responsibility to do what's right for our nation and our planet.

In addition, there were numerous government employees and consultants from California in attendance at the conference. Although hard to gauge due to the reduced length of the conference, I would say that the biggest issues discussed at the conference relative to California were water quality, beach nourishment, and regional sediment management. There were many presentations on Louisiana coastal processes, beach nourishment, habitat restoration, and shoreline preservation policy. Although not necessarily directly applicable to our unique coastal challenges, much of the information discussed in these presentations could prove indirectly applicable to California (e.g., strategy development, funding mechanisms, and analysis methods).

Thank you again for letting me represent our organization at the ASBPA conference. I wish I had more to report; however, Ivan dictated other plans that I was obliged to follow. I do hope to engage in more discussions with the conference attendees at our annual conference in October (see the conference announcement in this issue) so I will report back to you after that event. Until then, please continue your efforts to preserve and protect our state's shorelines and beaches.

In this medium, this message is probably "preaching to the choir," so please think about sharing this information with others who may not be receiving this newsletter. Plenty of folks are either uninformed about the issues at hand, or simply unsure of where to access the information they need to make an informed decision on Election Day. The *Newsbreaker* can be accessed online at www.csbpa.org.

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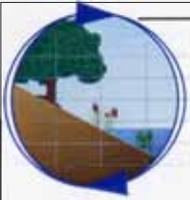
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If you have an article that would be of interest to our group, we would like to see it. Please submit articles for the next newsletter to Holly Celico-Lee at Holly@coast.ucsd.edu.

Please submit your articles for the January 2005 issue by December 20, 2004

Your Sand, My Sand, Our Sand

by Holly J. Celico-Lee

As noted in an editorial appearing in the *Los Angeles Times* on September 6, 2004, a settlement may be in the works for the continuing debate about public access to Broad Beach in Malibu. Homeowners are apparently talking with the Coastal Commission, which is seeking to enforce the public access easements that many property owners promised in return for permission to build or remodel their beachfront homes. In the proposed settlement, all the 100 homeowners involved “would agree to a

uniform 25-foot public easement of dry sand instead of the patchwork that now exists.” Also, the settlement will likely provide for sheriff’s deputies patrolling the beach, rather than the existing privately-hired guards, and for the removal of “no trespassing” signs. The author of the editorial supports the settlement and an end to “this ridiculous standoff in the surf.”

For the full text of the editorial please visit: <http://www.calcoast.org/news/beach0040906.html>



California Shore & Beach Preservation Association

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Long Beach, CA 90802
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**Return Service
Requested**

Headwaters to Oceans (H2O) Conference 2004

WHEN:

October 27-29, 2004 (beginning at 1:00pm on Oct. 27 and concluding in late afternoon on Oct. 29).
To accommodate the strongest-ever program, a full day has been added to the event!

WHERE:

Westin Long Beach. To make room reservations, call 1-800-WESTIN-1 (mention "H2O Conference").

WHO:

CSBPA (www.csbpa.org)
CalCoast (www.calcoast.org)
Society of Wetland Scientists, Southwest Chapter (www.sws.org/regional/western)
LA/San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council (www.lasgrwc.org)

WHAT:

The conference will open with a plenary session covering the California Performance Review, the State's draft Coast and Ocean Strategy, desalination, ocean observation systems and LNG development.

The event's Program Committee is finalizing the program and it will be posted at www.coastalconference.org and e-mailed it to all registrants. For updated conference information, visit www.coastalconference.org. For sponsor or exhibitor information, please call CalCoast at 760-944-3564.

For information on becoming a
member of CSBPA, please visit
www.asbpa.org/membership.html.

The Crises Facing Our Coastal Waters

*Opinion by Josh Reichert, Director of the Environment Division of the Pew Charitable Trusts
Reprinted with permission from the Pew Charitable Trusts*

As millions of Americans pack up their beach towels and folding umbrellas, many assume that the ocean they leave behind will be waiting for them next season, much the same as it has been for generations. We can no longer make such assumptions.

In the coming weeks, the U.S. Commission on Ocean Policy will deliver its report to the president. It follows another landmark study released earlier this year by the Pew Oceans Commission.

Both of these national commissions, one public, the other private, come to similar conclusions. America's oceans are in crisis.

Two-thirds of our estuaries and bays are polluted, and over 1,000 of the nation's beaches are routinely closed for periods of time each year due to pollution advisories. Coastal development and sprawl are destroying wetlands and other habitat essential for fish and wildlife at an alarming rate, further degrading water quality.

More than a third of the nation's assessed fisheries are either overfished or approaching that condition. An estimated 25 percent of all fish caught in American waters are thrown back dead or dying because fishermen do not want them. And, countless seabirds, including albatrosses, shearwaters, and petrels, as well as sea turtles, are caught and drowned each year by fishing gear. All are highly endangered in American waters.

Both commissions provide numerous reasons why we should care about the fate of our coastal waters. First, they are critically important to our lives and the livelihood of many Ameri-

cans. More than half of the U.S. population lives in coastal areas and over 180 million people visit the shore each year.

Millions of Americans earn all or a portion of their livelihood from commercial and recreational fishing, tourism, recreation and other activities that take place on America's beaches, bays, estuaries and deeper ocean waters. Collectively, these and other ocean related pursuits generate tens of billions of dollars each year for the nation's economy.

Of the area under U.S. jurisdiction, 23 percent more is covered by ocean than by land. Residing within this vast area are countless species of fish, birds, turtles, marine mammals, and other creatures that actually outnumber those species found on land. Many of these ocean dwellers are as yet unidentified and hold the potential to offer new medicines and other products of potential benefit to human society.

And, beyond what they give us materially, the nation's oceans provide tremendous pleasure and a source of aesthetic, spiritual, and creative inspiration to millions of Americans no matter where they live.

The consequences to the nation of not addressing the problems identified by the Pew and U.S. oceans commissions are profound. Not only do we stand to lose tens of thousands of jobs and the revenue that sustains hundreds of coastal communities, but we will also forfeit numerous other benefits that America's oceans provide.

For many years, we have failed to act on information that signaled the increasing deterioration of our marine environment. Perhaps the most egre-

gious example of this relates to fishing.

By failing to address problems of overfishing in many regions of the country, government officials and lawmakers have actually condemned the very people they are reportedly trying to help in the short term, with the loss of far more fishing jobs in the long run, along with the deterioration of ecosystems that are important to coastal economies and the American people as a whole. We have seen this in New England and the maritime provinces of Canada, where government refusal to cut back on fishing for fear of angering fishermen eventually resulted in the total collapse of the cod fishery, the elimination of thousands of jobs, and terrible economic hardship for fishing communities.

As these two reports indicate, America is at a crossroads with respect to the way in which we manage our ocean resources. We can continue on our present course and collectively witness the ongoing decline of one of the nation's most important natural resources, along with the jobs and other benefits it provides. Or we can turn in a different direction, one dictated by more careful stewardship and a willingness to make the hard choices in the short run that will benefit us all in the long run.

The latter course promises a bright future. The former will leave us little more than memories of the ocean we once had, but left behind.

This article originally appeared in the San Diego Union-Tribune on September 3, 2004.

Charley, Frances, and Ivan! Oh My!

Revisiting the Topic of Coastal Hazards

by Holly J. Celico-Lee

It's an opportune time to reflect on the topic of coastal hazards, now that Charley, Frances, and Ivan have ripped through the Caribbean and the Gulf making headlines, and at the time of this writing, Jeanne is flitting around over the Dominican Republic. California is no doubt lucky to be spared the likes of those storms, but folks here shouldn't become complacent while watching hurricane footage on the nightly news. "Fire season" is here, winter storms and the accompanying coastal erosion are just around the corner, and of course there could be earthquakes at any time in California. If the evil you don't know is worse than the evil you do know, the potential hazards in California would probably make even the hurricane-weary Floridians and other east coasters cringe.

They certainly make this east-coaster cringe! I had never witnessed anything akin to cliff erosion and bluff failure until I moved from sometimes-hurricane-hit Rhode Island to southern California! The image of houses balancing precariously on the buff-tops in Solana Beach is plain as day in my mind. How disturbing would it be to fall asleep in your bluff-top bedroom, only to possibly wake up in the surf below? And, I cannot fathom the destruction and terror that must accompany a major earthquake like Loma Prieta (1989) or Northridge (1994). What about a tsunami? Should I run up the hill from my oceanfront office every time the ground shakes?

Is it better to know what's coming your way, and be able to do nothing but sit and wait? Or is it better not to

have warning, but to have the hazard pass quickly? I remember being holed up with my family in the house all day, waiting for both hurricanes Gloria (1985) and Bob (1991) to pass by. It was boring, yet nerve racking, and Mom kept telling us to stay away from the windows. I remember, too, the guy across the street sitting on his front porch with a beer in hand, watching "the show." Dr. Ron called this morning from New Orleans, after riding out Ivan with a group from the ASBPA conference. They passed the time at their hotel listening to the wind whistling through the windows and, no doubt, wondering if they should have evacuated.



Ron mentioned that even though they're unexpected, at least earthquakes come and do their thing, and then they're over. There's no waiting around for two or three days for an earthquake to pass! And, like knowing there's a chance of an earthquake in California, there's always a chance a hurricane might generate tornados. Ivan did just that. However, whereas

Ivan's point of landfall and time of arrival could be predicted fairly well, who could say for sure where those spawned twisters might hit?

What about fires? Wildfires don't normally make east-coast headlines, but they can be a very real threat in California. Last October, when the fires in San Diego came within four or five miles of my little condo it was the waiting, like waiting for a hurricane to pass, that tormented me most. Would we have to leave? And, if so, where would we go? Or would our first-ever piece of real estate squeak by unscathed?

Whether or not we know if a hazard is coming, and whether it lasts for a few seconds or a few days, we should always be prepared for them. Everyone should have a family disaster plan in place and know the options for evacuation routes and shelters. Don't wait until it's too late. And, whether the hazards we know are better or worse than the hazards we don't know, we shouldn't lose sight of our own vulnerability. Mother Nature, as a hurricane, earthquake or some other natural hazard, should be respected and not challenged. When it comes to people versus nature, it's the people who should be prepared, get out of the way, and hope for the best while nature take its course.

For information on coastal hazards in California please visit: <http://ccs.ucsd.edu/coastalhazards>